

Editorial

This volume contains most of the invited papers delivered at the 40th International Wittgenstein Symposium in Kirchberg/W. in Lower Austria, August 6-12, 2017. It took place under the title “The Philosophy of Perception and Observation”. The intention of the symposium was to give a general overview of the newest topics in the philosophy of perception. It also included as usual papers on Wittgenstein, more or less related to the conference topic. This is not surprising, when we realize the lifelong dealing of Wittgenstein with the problem of perceiving and seeing-as – from a grammatical and psychological perspective. We all perceive the world with our senses and are processing this information from the external world. Most of us have already faced the following problem: did I see this accurately or was I deceived? What did I see exactly and what is the content of my perceptual experience? What did I see and what is a cognitive addition to my perceptual experience, through attention, memory or concepts? Already Wittgenstein raised similar questions, as in the well known passage from the *Philosophical Investigations*, (193 f.):

I contemplate a face, and then suddenly notice its likeness to another. I see that it has not changed; and yet I see it differently. I call this experience ‘noticing an aspect [...]’. And I must distinguish between ‘continuous seeing’ of an aspect and the ‘dawning’ of an aspect [...]. I see two pictures, with the duck-rabbit surrounded by rabbits in one, by ducks in the other. I do not notice that they are the same. Does it *follow* from this that I *see* something different in the two cases?

The aim of the symposium was to reflect the state of the art in the field of the philosophy of perception. In the last decade, the philosophy of perception underwent a strong expansion and revival. This was not only driven by results of scientific disciplines like the neuroscience and psychology and a stronger integration of the philosophy of perception with these sciences. It was also driven by a growing integration of the philosophy of perception with other subdisciplines of philosophy, like epistemology or metaphysics. The growing importance of the philosophy of attention, memory and imagination also yielded fruitful overlaps with the philosophy of perception. The sections of the conference aimed to reflect these new developments. The program sections of the conference focused on „Perception and Intentionality“, “Perception and Concepts”, “Epistemology of Perception”, „Perception and the Cognitive Sciences“ and „Theories and Observation“. As it is a tradition, the conference also included a general section on Wittgenstein, more or less connected to issues on perception. Additionally, we had scheduled a special workshop on „Brentano and the Myth of the Given“ on

the occasion of Brentano's centennial, which was also celebrated with a big conference in Prague and Vienna in June 2017 (thanks go to the organizers of that workshop Johannes Brandl and Guillaume Fréchette).

In recent years the debate between intentionalism and a relational view of perception, as well as the debate about different forms of direct realism, had been in the center of attention in the field. This is partially reflected in the first two sections of the volume. The first section focuses on the role of perception as a source of objectivity, as well as on different versions of perceptual realism. The second section includes papers on different views of intentionality and perceptual content, but connects also this debate to its historical origin in Brentano's conception of intentionality. Special attention of the volume (and the conference) is dedicated the uncertain distinction between perception and cognition: Can we find a clear-cut difference between cognitive and perceptual processes? How is verbal understanding connected to our perceptual capacities? This is the topic of the third section. Connected to these questions is the ongoing debate about the cognitive penetration of perception, which is the focus of the fourth section discussing the penetrability thesis as well as its epistemological and social implications. The epistemology of perception has been particularly enriched by the recent developments in the philosophy of perception. A section is dedicated to the questions related to the justificatory role of perception and the consequences this role may entail for our conception of the nature, object and content of perception (section 5). After a section on perception and its connection to the sciences (section 6), a final section covers general issues in the philosophy of Wittgenstein, focusing especially on the *Tractatus*. These were some of the central questions addressed by the most renowned philosophers in this field at the 40th International Wittgenstein Symposium and documented in this volume. We hope that the present volume will further contribute to the flourishing of the field.

The success story of the Wittgenstein Symposium of the Austrian Ludwig Wittgenstein Society had begun already in 1976. On the occasion of the 40th symposium there was an official public celebration in front of the community building of Kirchberg with the presentation of a brochure as a documentation of these symposia incl. personal reminiscences and reports, which is accessible in the website of the Wittgenstein Society.¹

We want to thank all invited speakers, among them 11 plenary speakers, and the authors of the conference pre-proceedings and of the present proceedings, obviously a set of the most renowned scholars in this field. Already in 2017 we

1 <https://www.alws.at/past-symposia-and-summer-schools/>

have published the pre-proceedings, including 95 submitted papers.² Our thanks go also to David Stern and Hans Sluga, who were the lecturers of the summer school 2017, organized by Volker Munz and dedicated to “Meaning, Mind, and Action: Wittgenstein’s Lectures, Cambridge, 1930-33”.

Concluding thanks go the staff of the Wittgenstein Society in Kirchberg directed by Margret Kronaus, together with Christiane Kuntner, in addition for the special service (editorial work, graphic design) provided by Sascha Windholz, to Brigitte Fuchs, the representative of our host as director of the beautiful Elementary School in Kirchberg/W., and to director Johannes Pepelnik on behalf of the supporting bank (Raiffeisenbank). Each symposium could not take place without the support and collaboration of the mayors of the Wittgenstein communities, above all Willibald Fuchs (Kirchberg/W.), as well as Johannes Hennerfeind (Trattenbach), Karl Mayerhofer (Otterthal), supported by the former mayor and honorary member of the Wittgenstein Society Ernst Schabauer. Last but not least we are grateful to the Province of Lower Austria governed by Johanna Mikl-Leitner, as the funding institution of the annual symposia, especially via the Science and Research Unit in St. Pölten, headed by Martina Höllbacher. In the long run also this volume as number 26 of the series *Publications of the Austrian Wittgenstein Society. New Series* is the result of a good cooperation with our publisher De Gruyter, represented by Christoph Schirmer, to whom we are grateful for a professional and friendly cooperation. We are also very thankful to Josef Pircher for the text editing of the present volume.

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² Christoph Limbeck-Lilienau and Friedrich Stadler (eds.) *The Philosophy of Perception and Observation. Contributions to the 40th International Wittgenstein Symposium*, Vol. XXV, Austrian Ludwig Wittgenstein Society, 2017, ISSN 1022-3398.

